

*The Sign of the Cross, explained
and Improved.*

IN A
S E R M O N

P R E A C H E D

At the EVENING-LECTURE
In the OLD-JEWRY,

On SUNDAY, OCTOBER 21, 1759.

On Occasion of the

Surrender of QUEBEC

T O

His MAJESTY'S FORCES,

SEPTEMBER 18, 1759.

By CHARLES BULKLEY.

L O N D O N :

Printed for J. NOON, in the Poultry; and C. HENDERSON,
under the Royal-Exchange. M DCC LIX.

The Spirit of the Times, Illustrated
and Improved.

IN A
SERIES OF
MON

At the Evening Lecture
in the Old Library

On the 10th of October at 1750.

On the occasion of the

Anniversary of QUEBEC

T. O.

His Majesty's Forces

SEPTEMBER 18, 1759.

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LONDON:

Printed for J. B. G. in the Strand, near the Royal Exchange.



PSALM cii. 13, 14, 15.

Thou shalt arise, and have mercie
upon Zion: for the time to favor
her, yea, the set time is come. For
thy servants take pleasure in her
stones, and favor the dust thereof.
So the heathen shall fear the name
of the Lord: and all the kings of
the earth thy glory.



HIS psalm is remarkable for the
very great mixture, that there is
in it, of lamentation and of joy.
Nor is this an inconsistencie, to
be censured; but rather indicates a beautie
and greatness of temper in the composer
of it, which we may justly admire. When
we look into the former part of it, and
observe the passionate and almost despairing

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language, in which he expresses himself in relation to his own private sorrows, one might be almost induced to imagine, that his heart must needs have been so much engrossed by them, as to be but little, if at all, at libertie for being affected by any other subject; that a man, for example, thus sunk in grief, must have been utterly incapable of sharing in the joys of his country; if not, thro' the exorbitant influence of this selfish passion, have in a manner lost the idea of any such connection with a national interest; and that the loudest acclamations of public exultation and applause might in vain attempt to reach the ears, much less the heart, of one thus immersed in private woes. For hear, how bitterly it is, that he bemoans himself.

“ For my days are consumed like smoke,
 “ and my bones are burnt as an hearth.
 “ My heart is smitten, and withered like
 “ grass; so that I forget to eat my bread.
 “ By reason of the voice of my groaning
 “ my bones cleave to my skin. I am like
 “ a pelican of the wilderness, I am like an
 “ owl of the desert. I watch and am as
 “ a sparrow alone upon the house-top.”

Might

Might one not imagine, that a man, thus
 banished from the world, and forgotten by
 it, had, in his turn too, forgotten the world?
 Yet see with what fervor, in what raptures
 of generositie and public zeal he instantly
 expresses himself in the words of the text,
 and some following parts of the psalm. "Thou
 " shalt arise, and have mercie upon Zion :
 " for the time to favor her, yea, the set
 " time is come. For thy servants take plea-
 " sure in her stones, and favor the dust
 " thereof. So the heathen shall fear the
 " name of the Lord, and all the kings of
 " the earth thy glory. When the Lord
 " shall build up Zion, he shall appear in
 " his glory. He will regard the prayer
 " of the destitute, and not despise their
 " prayer. This shall be written for the
 " generation to come, and the people, that
 " shall be created, shall praise the Lord.
 " For he hath looked down from the
 " height of his sanctuarie : from heaven
 " did the Lord behold the earth : to hear
 " the groaning of the prisoner, to loose
 " those, that are appointed to death ; to
 " declare the name of the Lord in Zion,
 " and his praise in Jerusalem. When the
 " people

" people are gathered together, and the
 " kingdoms to serve the Lord." With
 what freedom and enlargedness of soul is
 it, that he here expatiates, not merely up-
 on the interests of a single countrie, his na-
 tive land, but even of the universal world.
 So that now, instead of looking upon him,
 as a man overwhelmed in private sorrows,
 one would almost conclude, that everie
 sentiment of the kind had been, long ere
 this, absorbed in the love of his countrie and
 of mankind. Yet it is not wholly so : for
 presently again he recurs to his own perplex-
 ed and melancholic situation. " He weak-
 " ened my strength in the way, he shorten-
 " ed my days. I said, O my God, take
 " me not away in the midst of my days :
 " thy years are throughout all generations."
 With this thought, the apprehension of
 God's eternitie and immutabilitie he con-
 soles himself under his own personal afflic-
 tions. " Of old," as in most sublime and
 elegant language he proceeds, " hast thou
 " laid the foundation of the earth : and
 " the heavens are the work of thine hands :
 " they shall perish, but thou shalt endure ;
 " yea, all of them shall wax old, like a
 " garment :

" garment : as a vesture, shalt thou change
 " them, and they shall be changed. But thou
 " art the same, and thy years shall have no
 " end." Yet still he cannot content him-
 self with this confined and limited applica-
 tion of a sentiment so universally interest-
 ing and important. He therefore concludes
 the whole with glancing at that public
 welfare and interest, which, under the
 government of this eternal and immutable
 deitie, we may so justly believe will never
 be forsaken. " The children of thy ser-
 " vants shall continue, and their seed shall
 " be established before thee." Never, it
 is as if he had said, never shall there be
 wanting, a succession of those, who shall
 worship God in the simplicitie and puritie
 of the true religion, and in such a manner
 as shall be at once most honorable to his
 infinite perfections, and most highly con-
 duive to their own, and to the common
 happiness of mankind. Such is the noble
 and exalted spirit of benevolence animating
 the psalmist, and " awakening all that is
 " within him," in behalf of Zion, even
 to the remotest ages ; notwithstanding the
 comfortless and ill-boding situation of
 his

his own private affairs. This therefore is the

First thing, which I would point out, as deducible from the words of our text, and as a most important sentiment implied in it; that no sorrows of our own are to be so far indulged, as to divert our attention from the concerns and interest of the public, as not to leave the mind at libertie to be even warmly affected in its cause, and strongly susceptible of its joys. Were there any one, who could justly plead an exemption from this public tie, on account of the incumbencie and weight of his own personal calamities, by paritie of reason everie one else might do the like, and thus the communitie be wholly abandoned, and left to suffer shipwrack amidst the surrounding storms and tempests of private adversitie. Or, if it be only a certain degree of personal calamitie and distres, that is supposed sufficient to release us from the obligation of entertaining these more generous and extended views, will not everie man be at libertie to judge, in this point, for himself; and thus the fatal consequence be, upon the whole, the same?

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The proper conclusion therefore so forcibly exemplified in the temper of the Psalmist, as represented in this truly pathetic and affecting composition, is, that nothing of this kind ought so to contract our views, or to disturb the sweet and lovely order of nature, as to efface the remembrance of our countrie, or to eradicate those tender impressions, that have been wrought so deeply into our original, mental frame, in behalf of the diffused and general societie of mankind. Nay, even these afflictions befalling ourselves, if borne aright, will rather have a contrary effect. It is no part of our duty to be wholly unaffected by them. And he, that has no feelings at all, in behalf of himself, will scarcely have much sensibilitie to the interests of his kind. Whereas, if our private sorrows are rightly attempered, there will be in realitie some generous passion intermingled with them; it being scarcely possible, that any calamitie should be so absolutely personal, as not in some measure or another to obstruct the offices of beneficence and friendship towards our fellow-creatures; and this

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to the truly benevolent mind will be the greatest and most sensible affliction in them all. He therefore that sorrows in such a manner as this, within the narrower circle of his own private concerns, will naturally have his heart entended towards the public, and be disposed with still greater cordialitie to embrace its views. He will enter into its concerns with a truer sympathie, having been before accustomed to the like generous sensations, and be with a more absolute devotion of spirit addicted to its weal. And indeed, who would wish on any account to be released from the impressions of so felicitating an affection? what better fund of consolation can we have under our own adversities, than to have our hearts so connected with the common welfare, and with the great designs of providence in relation to it, as enables us warmly to take our share in everie thing, that is conducing to its advancement and stabilitie? and with what horror and self-condemnation must any one, sooner or latter, reflect upon himself for having, if in realitie he has, so far debilitated his public

blic affections thro' an excessive indulgence to more confined and selfish views, of whatever particular kind or nature, as to have become incapable of being impressed, in any generous way, even by the most important and interesting events, relative to the political and social connections of mankind ! who, for instance, would not be ashamed of an inability, thus contracted, for taking his patriot-share in those exhibitions of public joy, that were so lately diffused thro' the several parts of this extended metropolis, on account of the happy execution of a design, that reflects so much honor upon the resolution and magnanimity of those, who planned it, as well, as upon our brave, intrepid countrymen, by whom it has been effected. An event so full of terror and dismay, of perplexity and disappointment to the inveterate enemies, we have so long been contending with, for the security and preservation of our national liberties and peace ; and which, according to all the views, that human probability can at present suggest, must be so fruitful of important consequences, not only

only to our own prosperitie and happines as a free and protestant nation, but to our protestant allies, to the general interests of Europe and America; by no means excluding the now savage inhabitants of the territories that we have subdued. But this naturally leads us to a

Second reflection, which seems so obviously to arise out of the presaging and prophetic language of the psalmist in our text. and that is, that there are certain periods, certain coincidences, and concurring circumstances in the affairs and situation of public communities, from which the most pleasing expectations may with reason be formed, as to their advancing prosperitie and success. "Thou shalt arise and have
 "mercie upon Zion, for the time to favour her, yea, the set time is come". It is not improbable indeed, that, according to the general sense of expositors upon this psalm, written, as is supposed, during the time, and towards the close, of the babylonish captivitie, there may be in this part of our text an especial reference to those prophecies, in which the happy
 termination

termination of that captivitie had been miraculously foretold, and the restoration of the Jews to their native countrie and ancient temple. But, notwithstanding this, the mode of language is by no means unapplicable even to present times. For nature itself is not without her prophecies ; which may to us in some measure supplie the place of those, that were used to be delivered by the inspired seers of old. And it is undoubtedly one part of the divine intention, in the favorable events of providence towards a people, not merely to put them in possession of some present emolument, not merely to excite some transient emotions of joy, but to inspire them with hope, as to their future prosperitie and encreasing grandeur. And, if there be any such natural prognostications now subsisting in our own favor, concerning which we might almost venture to affirm, that nothing but our own iniquities can defeat them ; may we not then, humbly, as we most surely ought, but yet with some considerable degree of animating proprietie say ; " The Lord will
" have

"have mercie upon Zion, our british Zion, for
 "the time to favor her, yea, the set time is
 "come." That late instance of our national
 success, which has so much exhilarated all our
 hearts, is far from standing unconnected
 and alone, or appearing in the light of a
 merely casual exploit. No, it is of the
 same complexion with many other events,
 that have happily preceded it, in the course
 of the present war, and is to be looked upon
 as part of a plan, that has been wisely for-
 med upon a just and generous consciousness
 of our native strength and digmitie, as a people.
 It therefore carries in it so much the greater
 certaintie, as to the consequences, that are
 to be expected from it, and strongly indi-
 cates, what we may in reason presume to
 be, under God, the happie effect of our
 national powers vigorously and with proper
 resolution exerted. It is but a very little
 while ago, that we were almost ready to
 sink into despondencie, on account of that
 gloomy aspect, which our public affairs did
 then seem to wear. But by that pleasing
 change, which has since appeared in them,
 and of which our late success, is only a
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single, tho' indeed a most important instance, we are convinced, that those uncomfortable appearances were not owing to any defect in our inherent strength, as a nation; which must needs have been alike competent then, as now, to the maintenance of our wonted dignitie and character. This then shews us the mightie difference, that is so soon to be effected by a truly national and patriotic spirit animating those, who are entrusted with the direction of our national affairs, and that God in his providence is ever willing to help that people, who by a just sence of their dutie are inclined to exert themselves for their common safetie and defence. We have been plainly, as a nation in general, awakened of late into a more lively conviction of the part, which is severally incumbent upon us, as members of the communitie. And we see, what has been the consequence. We see the truth of that maxim, confirmed by present example and visible effects, which has been so often in theorie inculcated upon us to no purpose; that, "if we amend our ways" and our doings, the Lord will have mer-

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“cie upon us and be favorable unto us,” and that the connexion, which is so much, and cannot indeed be too frequently or forcibly, insisted upon, between national virtue and national prosperitie, is not the mere chimera of imagination, but has its indisputable foundation in nature. And from hence, how plainly may we collect, what is our farther dutie, as the means of advancing our national prosperitie and honor? For God’s sake, and for our countrie’s sake, let us not stop at these good beginnings. Let us not vainly presume, that because we have done something in the reformation of our public manners, we have therefore done enough. Let not that something, already done, prove abortive and ineffectual for want only of proceeding a little farther, or by relapsing again into our former lukewarmness and insensibilitie. But let these fair presages, these goodly hopes, so visibly arising out of our better spirit, encourage us to go on, in the cultivation and improvement of it; and to correct everie vice; everie latent, everie open iniquitie, as most certainly fatal, in
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the degree of their prevalence, to the public weal, and to our own interest and prosperity, as connected with it. There are some vices indeed, that more immediately strike at the root of public happiness than others. But still whatever guilty passion, it is, that we indulge, it must of necessity, so far as indulged, supplant the better ones, and the love of our country among the rest.

But by these general hints we are naturally led to some other happy indications subsisting in our favor, and strongly exemplified in those recent tidings, that have been so welcome to every British ear. As, for instance, the signal bravery of our troops in that gallant action, furnishing us with so pleasing a proof, that there are still those among us, who can stand as fearless and undismayed in the very face of danger, as others at a convenient distance from it. We cannot indeed enough lament the early loss of that generous hero, who led them on to conquest. And yet even in that loss itself, there are ample sources of consolation, which, heaven grant,

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may be richly enjoyed, by those who are in the tenderest manner affected by it. Had he been less brave, he might indeed have spared his life — and have frustrated too that design, for the sake of which he was sent on purpose to expose it. But he scorned to spare it, or even to put the success of the enterprise to the least possible hazard, upon such ignoble terms. He has shortened his days, and immortalised his fame. And was it not better? better surely, to die in glorie at thirty-five, than to have dragged on his days in infamy and disgrace to twice that period. And in his untimely death, as, on some accounts, we are with sorrow to esteem it, tho' most opportune indeed and seasonable for his own renown and England's glory, what an inspiring example have we of that magnanimity and heroism; which, it is to be hoped, will fire the breast of every British soldier with the generous ambition of recording his worth in the lasting characters of imitation? And thus may the death of a single hero be the means of making many, and its consequences amply compensate the present

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sent loss we sustain by it. Nor can we forbear, upon this occasion, to reflect, with pleasure, upon that generally prevailing disposition now so apparent amongst us, voluntarily to arm in defence of our country, and upon the revival, under the sanction of public authority, of our martial and manly spirit. These are appearances, in our favor, which have, I doubt not, already intimidated our enemies, and bid fair, I trust, for preventing any hostile attempt, that they may have been designing against our native land, as well as of delivering ourselves from that consternation and dismay, to which, otherways, upon the slightest report of any such designs, we might be continually exposed. Again, in the account of this great achievement we see, how much of our success has been owing to the spirit of union, which, without a single exception, so far as appears, prevailed among the several commanders both by sea and land, and in scenes of action and enterprise so extremely different. This is not only a point of the highest consequence in itself towards the success of our

military efforts, but is, in the present instance, a still more pleasing and welcome "token for good," on account of those disappointments in our public measures, that we have so lately met with, for want only of such a spirit. And just of the same importance, as were the union and harmonic, with which this particular undertaking has been so honorably conducted, to the success of it, is the same spirit animating our national counsels in general, and diffusing itself thro' the whole community, to our intire happiness and prosperity, as a people. How justly then may we look upon it as a prelude to our advancing glorie, that what in this instance appears to be of so much importance, will likewise, upon a little attention, be found to be the real spirit now prevailing amongst us. Never were we a more united people: never was faction so nearly subsiding into absolute oblivion; never such a happy consent of minds for our common safety and defence. When to these several circumstances we add, that generous encouragement, which is amongst us so publicly

blicly given to the cultivation of every useful art and science, both in our colonies and on our native spot, that internal peace, that flourishing trade and extended commerce, which we have so long enjoyed, even during a state of war, and by which we have been so happily distinguished from many neighbouring nations, among whom its desolating horrors have now for some successive years been so fatally experienced and deeply felted; when we reflect upon the many signal advantages and victories that have been gained over our enemies, besides that latest one, of such peculiarly high and eminent importance, and those perplexities and embarrassments, to which their public transactions must by this means be reduced; when we reflect upon the injustice and iniquitie of their ambitious attempts upon the peace and territories of the neighboring nations; when we consider, on the other hand, what it is, that we ourselves contend for, not merely for life, not for the sake of lengthening out a sordid being and slavish existence, not for the sake of adding strength to tyrannie and supporting

supporting the exercise of an arbitrarie and lawless power ; but for the most precious rights and liberties, that any nation ever did, or any nation can enjoy : when, I say, we lay all these things together, may we not with some humble confidence say. “ The Lord will have mercie upon-Zion ; for the time to favor her, yea, the set time is come.” For what may not be expected from a flourishing, brave and united people, exerting themselves in such an inspiring cause ; and in defence of those inestimable privileges, which, it is so natural to presume, should, in proportion to their importance, invigorate our efforts for their continuance and perpetuities. And this is

A third particular suggested to us in the following words of the text : “ For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favor the dust thereof.” This is expressive of that tender affection, which the Jewish people retained for their country, notwithstanding their present estrangement and distance from it. They recollected with a kind of veneration and extatic

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tic pleasure, the stately buildings, and particularly the goodly temple of Jerusalem, tho' now, alas, in ruins. And even the very "dust" of their native soil served, in remembrance and imagination, to excite their affectionate wishes towards it. It is plain too, that this is mentioned, as a circumstance presaging the favor of heaven towards them. "The Lord will have mercie upon Zion, for the time to favor her, yea, the set time is come : *for* thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favor the dust thereof." They loved and "favored" it themselves, and were not a little delighted with the hope and expectation of seeing it again in all its glorie ; and might therefore innocently and chearfully entertain the animating hope, that heaven would "favor" it too. They could not but look upon this as an emotion of soul, that was highly pleasing and acceptable in the sight of God, and might hence reasonably encourage themselves in concluding, that he would not fail, in his gracious providence, of giving success to their laudable exertion of themselves in conformitie to its dictates.

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And surely this is a presage of national happiness, that cannot be wanting among ourselves. If very slaves, as we have known, and as, at this very day, is the case, are willing to encounter the greatest dangers, and to expose even their lives in defence of the miserable land they dwell in; miserable, because enslaved, however in other respects delightful, shall we, the children of libertie, inhabiting its temple, and surrounding its throne, be indifferent to her residence among us. It can never be, that any British heart should be so far degenerated from the high-born spirit of our noble ancestors. And, according to the order of God's universal providence, who never giveth, but to those, who "seek," who never "opens," but to those, who "knock;" and whose promise, it is, a promise delivered by the voice of nature, as well, as in the venerable pages of holy writ, that, if we "seek" him, he will be "found" of us, what happier omen can we have in our favor, than such a spirit of loyalty and good affection to our country generally diffusing itself amongst us? Amidst
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so many other striking indications then of the gracious views and purposes of divine providence towards us, on account of which it may with so much probabilitie be presumed, that " the time to favor our Britissh Zion, even the set time is *indeed* " come," let not that farther happie one be wanting, which depends upon the zeal and fervor of our own hearts in its behalf. What is there, that should make us indifferent in our countrie's cause? what, that does not call upon us, with heart and hand to join in our utmost efforts for its salvation and defence; nor to " count" our fortunes, or even " life itself, dear unto us," may we but be contributing to its preservation and honor? have we not the best form of government, the best laws, the best reigning prince, the highest civil libertie, and the greatest freedom in religion, of any nation under heaven? But were it possible, that such mightie and interesting considerations, as these, should prove insufficient for warming our hearts, and animating our zeal, there is yet another suggested to us

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by the noble spirit of the psalmist, as expressed in the conclusion of our text. " So " the heathen shall fear the name of the " Lord, and all the kings of the earth thy " glory." In comparison of the god-like spirit of universal benevolence, even the love of our country is in a manner but a selfish passion. And in some instances the one, in the corruption and degeneracie of it at least, has been known to operate to the prejudice of the other. But in our own case, and according to the strictest realitie and truth of it, they cannot interfere, in fact they coincide. And the more we love mankind, the more, for that very reason, shall we be induced to interest ourselves in the prosperitie and honor of our country. Among all the blessings, that can be enjoyed by any body or communitie of people, there are none, that can by any means equal, in their importance, that, of which the psalmist here speaks, " the fear " of God's name," or, as this sacred language imports, the reverential adoration of him founded upon just and proper apprehen-

apprehensions of the transcendent and matchless "glories" of his nature. But we all know, how much this exalted and divine principle has been obstructed, in its happy influence upon the mind, by the corruption, in popish countries, of that very system of christianitie, which was intended to elevate and enoble every religious and devout affection, and to advance it to its highest pitch of puritie and excellence. And, as to the poor American Indians, as they have never had the opportunitie of corrupting, so neither of improving, this grand dispensation of divine mercie and love. But where, let it now be asked, is that nation or people of the earth so likely to be the intended instruments of divine providence, in dispelling, either Popish or Indian darknes, than we of this reformed countrie, this enlightened and happie land? Or when the period, which we might have better supposed introductorie to so interesting and delightful a scene, as now? and with what consistencie can we make any pretensions either to the faith or

charitie of christians, if we would not be chearfully contributing our utmost to so desirable an end?

Upon the whole then we see, in what manner it is, that we are to express our sense of that signal triumph over our enemies, which has been so lately the subject of our common joy. Whether this be indeed "the time" appointed, in the order and decree of heaven, for bringing about those great events I have been hinting at, I by no means intend absolutely to determine. I have been only endeavoring to animate your minds with the same pleasing hopes that I find arising in my own, and to direct your thoughts to some probable enough presumptions in favor of them. But this I know, that the period is now arrived, which we ourselves had in expectation *set*, as that, which we hoped, might prove wholly decisive in our favor, as a people engaged in war, and put an end in a manner extremely happy and glorious, both for ourselves and our allies, to all the horrors and desolations of it. The acquisition of the place, which God has now put
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into our hands, has, in this view of it, been, for sometime past, considered, as one of the grand and ultimate objects in the plan of our military operations. And now he has "arisen, and shewn mercie unto us," in the very way that we ourselves had in thought and eager expectation been, as it were, prescribing. "This is the Lord's doing, it is marvellous in our eyes." And is there nothing then to be done, on our part, and by way of return? or shall providence by such sweet and gentle invitations, by so pleasing and welcome a voice, be calling upon us, to "regard the things, that belong to our peace," and we, after all, in ungrateful disobedience, as well as, in the height of folly, be unmindful of them? O never, never let it be said of us, as it was of old concerning Jerusalem; "how often would I have gathered you, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and you would not!" But let us be all concurring with the intimations of providence by the renewed and more vigorous practice
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of that righteousness, "which," in whatever particular species of it appearing, cannot fail of contributing, in its degree, to the "exaltation" of our Land.

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